

The war in Iraq is by no means an unfamiliar event to the American people. Though the concept and the premise of the war are notorious, the actual setting remains indistinct. In the given email, a soldier serving in Iraq describes the different aspects of his life in Iraq. The author of the email expresses his bitter attitude toward the experience by employing devices such as imagery, diction, and syntax to appeal to both the readers' emotions and knowledge of the author.

On the mental journey that the soldier takes the reader through, he utilizes imagery to convey his attitude towards his experiences in Iraq as well as appealing to his audience. While describing his living conditions, he paints a clear and relatable picture for the reader. He describes his living conditions as the equivalent of "[going] to your vacuum, open[ing] the canister, and pour[ing] it all over you, your bed, clothing and your personal effects [and] roll[ing] in it until it's in your eyes, nose, ears, hair" (3-4). By using a familiar concept, vacuum filth, to describe his day to day living conditions, it brings the reader closer to the experience. A familiar idea helps the reader begin to relate to the author's every day, thus creating a pathos appeal. He takes the images of filth even further when he describes his tent situation as being comparable to "bring[ing] in a kennel full of pugs; [and how] the smells, snoring and social graces [would] be just like living with [his] nine tentmates" (13-15). Both of these images elicit the feeling of being dirty and grimy; a feeling to which most can relate. The familiarity of the emotions expressed in both images allows the reader to sympathize and empathize with the soldier's situation. The soldier goes on to use numerous other images to recreate his everyday in terms that the non-soldier can comprehend. One commonality between all of the images used is that they are images with a negative connotation. The negative nature of his descriptive imagery expresses his bitterness toward his experiences in more graphic terms.

Throughout the email, the author employs distinct diction which provides an ethos appeal. Before reading the email, the reader has a clear understanding of who the narrator is: a soldier. They know where he is serving. With this knowledge, the reader already has a general persona for the narrator. In the email itself, the soldier uses military jargon, specifically when he's talking about time and "staggering to the john at 0400" (20). The diction specific to the military adds to his soldier persona and reputability, thus providing an ethos appeal for the audience. Such an ethos appeal makes him more reliable to his audience and in turn the audience will be more likely to believe or consider what he has to say. In the midst of the instructional email, the soldier interjects personal statements which show his outlook on the whole experience. One example of this interjection is seen after he describes his filthy living conditions; he says that "you just get used to it" (7). His word choice for the sentence and many other personal interjections like it exude a bitter or even indifferent tone. The description of the already adverse conditions helps readers empathize, but when given an interjection that essentially says "...and this is what I have to go through everyday" elicits even more sympathy.

Another rhetorical strategy the author makes use of is syntax. From the very beginning of the email, the reader can pick up on a very procedural writing style. The email begins by taking the reader on a "small mental voyage" (2) and then proceeds in a step-by-step description of his daily life. "OK, pitch a tent in your driveway, and mark off an area inside it along one wall about six feet by eight feet...now pack everything you need to live for four months and move in. tear down the three walls of your tent... and you have about as much privacy as I have" (8-12). Through an instructional journey, the author is able to draw attention to and clearly illustrate certain aspects of his experience. The procedural manner in which he describes his daily life

commands the reader to imagine and conjure up a mental picture of what he's talking about. Through instructional syntax, the readers foster connections between the life of a soldier and their own.

The rhetorical strategies employed in any letter, essay or speech are crucial in conveying how the author feels and how the audience receives the information in the work. Often times, the devices, sentence structure and even word choice can affect how the message of the work is interpreted or received. Being able to identify these rhetorical strategies enables the reader take something away from the work and to interpret the authors view on the matter.